# U.S. Embassy Vienna

Public Affairs Section Request for Grant Proposals: FY2017 Young Transatlantic Leader

Exchange: Entrepreneurship and Innovation **Announcement Type:** Cooperative Agreement

Fiscal Year Funds: 2016

**Application Deadline:** July 25, 2016

**Total Funding:** \$160,000, pending the availability of funds

**Approximate Number of Awards:** 1

Approximate Average Award: \$160,000, pending the availability of funds

Floor of Award Range: None

**Ceiling of Award Range:** \$160,000, pending the availability of funds

Funding Opportunity Number: S-AU900-16-CA-001 Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.040

Anticipated Award Date: Pending the availability of funds, August 22, 2016

Anticipated Project Completion Date: November 30, 2017

Funding Opportunity Title: Young Transatlantic Leader Exchange: Entrepreneurship and

Innovation

**Eligible applicants:** Applications may be submitted by public and private non-profit organizations and institutions of higher education meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).

**Additional Information:** Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is Embassy Vienna's intent to renew this cooperative agreement for up to two additional fiscal years, before openly competing it again.

### **SUMMARY:**

The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in Vienna invites proposals for a cooperative agreement to design and implement a two-to-three week exchange program that will provide at least 18 Austrian university students with intensive, hands-on entrepreneurship education and leadership development training. Public and private non-profit organizations and institutions of higher education meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to create an exchange program to foster entrepreneurship, leadership, and professional skills of young Austrians with a demonstrated interest in an entrepreneurial future while exposing them to American culture and values.

#### **FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

#### **Authority:**

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations

between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

### **Overview:**

The Young Transatlantic Leader Exchange: Entrepreneurship and Innovation will provide at least 18 Austrian university students with intensive, hands-on entrepreneurship education and leadership development training. This course, which will focus on the entrepreneurial ecosystem of a particular U.S. city or region will last two to three weeks, taking place between July 5-September 30, 2016. Participants could travel to the U.S. in one to three cohorts. In addition to developing participants' knowledge and skills, the program exposes participants to American culture and values.

As this will be a cooperative agreement, U.S. Embassy Vienna will have substantial involvement in this effort including participant selection, approval of the program structure and content in the United States.

The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy is providing maximum flexibility for applicant organizations to offer program models that effectively meet the overall goals of the program. Required or suggested elements of the program are as follows:

- The program should include an orientation in the U.S., entrepreneurship education and leadership development and significant cultural activities to familiarize participants with the diversity of the cultures and the people of the local area.
- The program should include pre-departure virtual activities that prepare participants for the upcoming program and, if applicable, introduce them to work groups. Pre-departure programs could include initial program activities, and/or teambuilding or networking.
- Participants should work in teams and develop relationships with other participants, and/or entrepreneurs in the local community.
- Participants should learn about the essential elements of an entrepreneurial ecosystem and how these elements inter-relate. Participants should have the opportunity to experience these elements in the local community through interactive, hands-on training, which might include, for example: presentations, meetings with entrepreneurs, social events, or business pitch presentations. Internships or practicums in businesses, NGOs, innovation hubs, or economic/business-related organizations could also be included.
- Social entrepreneurship: Participants should learn how entrepreneurial principles can be addressed to social ills, and how entrepreneurial concepts can spur civic action.
- The program should include a plan for post-program engagement with the Austrian participants that includes mentoring and supporting participants as alumni of this program.
- The Recipient will identify their own specific and measurable outputs and outcomes based on the project specifications provided in the solicitation.

### The program goals are to:

- Foster entrepreneurship, leadership, and professional skills of young Austrians to become business or social entrepreneurs and/or leaders in their respective fields to support the expansion of entrepreneurial values in Austria.

- Promote the awareness of future Austrian entrepreneurs of the entrepreneurial ecosystem as practiced in the U.S.
- Encourage identification of the United States as a destination for future business partnerships, investment and ongoing education.
- Foster professional and personal ties with local entrepreneurs and U.S. citizens in the local community.
- Promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of Austria.

**Participants:** In consultation with the Embassy, the Recipient should create and manage an application process and screen applications for the Embassy. The Embassy will manage recruitment in consultation with the Recipient, and will strive to recruit an applicant pool from diverse educational and personal backgrounds from all areas of academic study. Participants will be Austrian university students (ages 18-28) with a demonstrated interest in social or business entrepreneurship. U.S. Embassy Vienna will select participants for the program.

## **Timing**

It is anticipated that the cooperative agreement will be awarded on or about August 22, 2016, in the form of a cooperative agreement. The program should take place during the Austrian university summer holiday period, i.e. July 5 – September 30, 2017. Applicants should propose the period of the exchange(s) in their proposals, but the exact timing of the project may be altered through the mutual agreement of the U.S. Embassy and the recipient.

# **Program Structure:**

Applicants must have the organizational capacity to directly implement and/or oversee all aspects of the program.

Award recipients will be responsible for their partners' activities under the cooperative agreement both programmatically and financially. The cooperative agreement requires that the administering organization be able to manage the program in its entirety, while coordinating activities with the U.S. Embassy.

Applicants should propose a program model that strives to maximize the number of participants, while still maintaining a high quality of experience for the participants. The overall number of participants will vary depending on the length of program and the types of activities included.

### **Program Activities:**

- Logistics: Manage all logistical arrangements, including passport and visa applications, international and domestic travel, ground transportation, accommodations, group meals, and disbursement of stipends.
- **Orientations:** Provide an orientation for participants at the beginning of the program.
- Activities/Classes/Hands-on Training: Design and implement two to three weeks of activities that provide a substantive educational and practical experience that develops

participants' knowledge and skills. The Embassy urges applicants to present innovative, resourceful, and effective programming ideas. Applicants should justify their choices by explaining how their program plan will meet the stated goals. The core component of the program should focus on teaching practical entrepreneurial skills and orienting the participants to the entrepreneurial ecosystem of the particular city or region. In addition, applicants may propose any number of additional educational, practical, or community activities to enhance the overall program experience.

- Accommodations: Arrange appropriate housing for the duration of the exchange
  program, which might be in a university dormitory, hotel, or with a host family. If home
  stays with host families are arranged, the families must be properly screened and briefed
  and the award recipient must have a clear and detailed host family recruitment, screening,
  and selection process.
- **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:** Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Embassy recommends that proposals include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to linking outcomes to original project objectives. The Embassy expects that the recipient organization will track participants or partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, and changes in behavior as a result of the program. The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Develop and implement a plan to monitor the participants' safety and well-being during the exchange and to create opportunities for participants to share potential issues and resolve them promptly. Applicants must also ensure that all partner organizations, if applicable, are properly monitored to ensure the effective administration of the program and proper use of funds.

## **Responsibilities:**

- The Recipient/award recipients' specific responsibilities for this program include, but may not be limited to:
  - In consultation with the Embassy, develop application forms and/or application process and screen application materials. The Recipient should identify criteria for the selection of participants and create a formal process that includes an application and an interview (either by telephone or in-person). Embassy will be responsible for recruitment, in consultation with the Recipient.
  - 2) Recommend the final participants and alternates for Embassy approval.
  - 3) Contact participants before the program to provide them with program information, predeparture materials, and to gather information about their specific interests.
  - 4) Conduct pre-departure virtual activities that prepare participants for the upcoming program and, if applicable, introduce them to work groups; Pre-departure programs could include initial program activities, and/or teambuilding or networking.
  - 5) Ensure that each participant meets medical and health standards and has required immunizations to travel.

- 6) Enroll participants in a health benefits plan for the duration of the exchange that meets the minimum requirements for J-1 visas, and assist with claims as necessary.
- 7) Develop a syllabus and curriculum that focuses on giving participants practical, hands-on knowledge from successful entrepreneurs (business and social) and entrepreneurship educators and simulate real-life entrepreneurial experiences as much as possible.
- 8) Make housing arrangements. If applicable, carefully recruit, screen, and select diverse local host families to offer homestays (lodging and meals) to the participants for the majority of the exchange period.
- 9) Arrange participants' international and domestic travel. The recipient must comply with all federal regulations regarding the use of U.S. government funds including the Fly America Act.
- 10) Provide a welcome orientation to serve as an introduction to the program and its objectives as well as an introduction to the United States.
- 11) Design, plan, and implement an intensive and substantive two to three-week entrepreneurship exchange program that focuses on giving participants practical, hands-on knowledge from successful entrepreneurs (business and social) and entrepreneurship educators and simulate real-life entrepreneurial experiences as much as possible.
- 12) Arrange appropriate community, cultural, and social activities to familiarize participants with the diversity of the cultures and the people of the local area.
- 13) Provide day-to-day monitoring of the participants' well-being, preventing and dealing with any misunderstandings or adjustment issues that may arise in a timely manner. Inform the Embassy about any significant health or safety issues affecting program participants.
- 14) Provide an adequate stipend for participants in addition to a possible education or cultural allowance.
- 15) Make a plan for post-program engagement with the Austrian participants that includes mentoring and supporting participants as alumni of this program.
- 16) Identify specific and measurable outputs and outcomes based on the project specifications provided in the solicitation.

## The Embassy's activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

- 1) Provide advice and assistance in the execution of all program components.
- 2) Consult with the Recipient when developing application materials and screening applications.
- 3) Recruit potential participants, in consultation with the Recipient.
- 4) Select participants, in consultation with the Recipient.
- 5) Facilitate the passport and J-1 visa application process for the foreign participants;
- 6) Issue DS-2019 forms required for the J-1 visas for the foreign participants. All foreign participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program.
- 7) Approve housing arrangements, including the host families' location, if applicable;
- 8) Monitor and evaluate the program, through regular communication with the award recipient and possibly one or more site visits.

### **Application and Submission Information**

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Embassy staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Failure to furnish all information or comply with stated requirements will not be considered. Applicants must set forth accurate and complete information as required by this NOFO. The penalty for making false statements in proposals to the U.S. government is prescribed on 18 U.S.C. 1001.

Applicants should submit a proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible. Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the Grant Solutions Application Checklist:

### **Online Forms**

SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance"

SF-424A, "Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs" or other budget document with detailed budgeting information

SF-424B, "Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs"

## **Executive Summary**

In one double-spaced page, provide a summary of the proposed program including information on the applicant, partner organizations, an overview of the exchange, beginning and ending dates of the exchanges, and funding level requested from the U.S. Embassy in Vienna.

### **Narrative**

Within 20 double-spaced, single sided pages with one inch margins, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below. In the narrative, applicants should not only describe major program activities but also explain and justify their programmatic choices. All materials should be submitted in one of the following formats: .xls, .xlsx, .doc, .docx, .pdf, .jpeg. No other file types will be reviewed.

- 1. Vision: Describe the project objectives and the desired outcomes, i.e., the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudinal changes that the participants will acquire.
- 2. Participating Organizations: Identify critical partner organizations for the program, their roles, and the applicant's reasons for including them, if applicable. Applicants must also describe their working relationship with the partner organization(s) and detail the division of program responsibilities between the award recipient and the partner organization(s).

- 3. Recruitment, Screening, and Selection: Describe how the applicant will coordinate with the U.S. Embassy to create and manage an application process and screen applications. Outline the criteria by which the Recipient will select final participants and alternates for Embassy selection.
- 4. Project Activities: Describe the components of the exchanges and how they related to project themes, including project planning, orientations, educational activities, cultural activities, meetings, site visits, or other proposed activities. A detailed schedule, outlining the program exchanges should be included as an appendix. Also, describe support for post-program engagement that includes mentoring and supporting participants as alumni.
- 5. Travel, Housing, and Other Logistics: Detail how the applicant will arrange international travel (in compliance with the Fly America Act); domestic travel; homestays if applicable (specifically describe recruitment, screening, and monitoring) and other housing arrangements; ground transportation; stipend disbursement; and relevant administrative matters.
- 6. Participant Monitoring: Detail how the applicant will assure the well-being, safety, and security of program participants during all stages of the program.
- 7. Program Evaluation: In the submitted proposal, applicants should include a plan describing how success in meeting the stated goals of the program will be measured and reported.
- 8. Institutional Capacity and Project Management: Outline the applicant organization's capacity to conduct projects of this nature, focusing on three areas of competency: provision of educational and thematic programs; as well as previous work in the region. Describe the program staffing (individuals and responsibilities), qualifications, structure, and resources. If applicable, include this information for primary partner organizations as well.
- 9. Work Plan/Schedule: Outline the phases of the project planning and implementation for the entire award period. Provide a draft schedule of daily activities of the exchanges in an appendix.

### **Additional Attachments**

- Work Plan / Calendar of Activities
- Letters of Support from partner organizations, if applicable
- Resumes of key personnel
- Copy of indirect agreement, if applicable
- Detailed budget (Excel spreadsheet)
- Budget narrative

#### **BUDGET INFORMATION**

The anticipated level of funding available for this program is approximately \$160,000, which will support one cooperative agreement for exchanges between the United States and Austria. The Embassy reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

The available funding may be used to support the program and administrative costs necessary to implement the program as described in this solicitation. Please submit a comprehensive line item budget, broken down according to the budget line items in the SF-424A: Personnel; Fringe Benefits; Travel; Equipment; Supplies; Contractual; Construction; Other Direct Costs; and Indirect. Indicate how costs are calculated (for example, staff salary x percentage of time worked x number of months worked).

An explanatory budget narrative must also be included. For clarification, any applicant applying to implement more than one project should provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity.

Suggested program costs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Staff travel and per diem
- Application materials
- Participant travel (international, domestic, ground transportation, passport and visa fees)
- Orientations
- Cultural and social activities
- Meeting costs
- Lodging and food
- Evaluation
- Other justifiable expenses directly related to supporting program activities

While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, the Embassy urges applicants to keep administrative costs as low and reasonable as possible. Proposals should show strong administrative cost-sharing contributions from the applicant, the in-country partner, and other sources.

## **Cost Sharing**

U.S. Embassy Vienna encourages cost-sharing, which may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition, but a very competitive application will include cost sharing that allows for more participants. The recipient of an assistance award must maintain written records to support all allowable costs which are claimed as its contribution to cost participation, as well as costs to be paid by the federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB Circular A-110 (Revised), Subpart C (23) "Cost-sharing or Matching," and should be described in the proposal.

## **Indirect Costs**

An organization with an audited indirect cost rate negotiated with a cognizant federal government agency other than U.S. Department of State should include a copy of the cost-rate agreement as an addendum to the budget. If the applicant currently has an assistance award from U.S. Department of State, the agreement does not need to be submitted unless the applicant has negotiated a new indirect cost rate with a cognizant agency other than U.S. Department during the past 12 months. An applicant must indicate in the proposal budget how the rate is applied.

### **Insurance**

Exchange program regulations require that all J-l visa holders carry health and accident insurance. At a minimum, insurance must provide the following benefits:

- 1. Medical coverage of at least \$50,000 per person per accident or illness;
- 2. Repatriation of remains in the amount of \$7,500; and
- 3. Medical evacuation benefits of at least \$10,000.

### **Taxes**

The Recipients are responsible for complying with all applicable tax treaties and federal, state and local laws on tax withholding and reporting for project participants. Because of the complexity of current tax laws regarding scholarship and fellowship income, it is strongly recommended that the Recipients consult with tax counsel regarding such compliance.

#### APPLICATION SUBMISSION

#### **Method of Submission:**

Applications must be submitted electronically via email to both: <u>ViennaGrants@state.gov</u> and Grants Officer Kellee Farmer at <u>FarmerK@state.gov</u>.

All applications must be submitted <u>on or before Friday, July 25, 2016, 5:00 p.m. Vienna Time</u>. Emails that show a time stamp produced by the Department of State computer system as having been received after 5:00 p.m. will be ineligible for consideration.

**Begin the application process early**, as this will allow time to address any technical difficulties that might arise in advance of the deadline. U.S. Embassy Vienna strongly advises early submission of applications to ensure delivery prior to the stated deadline.

There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

#### **REVIEW PROCESS**

U.S. Embassy Vienna will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee consisting of representatives of several U.S. Embassy sections. Applications will also be forwarded to the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, Office of Public Diplomacy (EUR/PD) for review.

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

- 1. Quality of the Program Idea: Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan. The proposed program should be creative, respond to the design outlined in the solicitation, and demonstrate originality. It should be clearly and accurately written, substantive, and with sufficient detail.
- **2. Program planning:** A detailed work plan should clearly demonstrate how project objectives would be achieved. The agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.
- **3. Institutional Capacity and Track Record:** Proposed personnel and institutional resources in both the United States and Austria should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program goals. The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management.
- **4. Program Monitoring and Evaluation:** The proposal should include a plan to evaluate the program's success in meeting its goals, both as the activities unfold and after they have been completed. The proposal should include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique, plus a description of a methodology to link outcomes to original project objectives. The award recipient will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded.
- **5.** Cost-effectiveness and Cost Sharing: The applicant should demonstrate efficient use of funds. The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. The proposal should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions, which demonstrates institutional and community commitment.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## **Additional Requirements:**

You are required to have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to apply for a grant or grant from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a DUNS number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a DUNS number, access http://www.dunandbradstreet.com or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your DUNS number is included in the appropriate box of the SF-424 which is part of the formal application package.

All federal award recipients must maintain current registrations in the System for Award Management (SAM) database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. Failure to register in SAM will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application.

# **Administrative and National Policy Requirements:**

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following: Office of Management and Budget's Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Effective December 26, 2014, replacing the previous circulars).

For a copy of the OMB circular cited, please contact the U.S. Government Publishing Office or download from the <a href="https://www.ecfr.gov">www.ecfr.gov</a> website.

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants.

https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/pages/home.aspx

**Reporting Requirements:** You must provide the U.S. Embassy's Grants Officer (contact information will be in the final grant agreement) with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

- 1.) Quarterly Program Reports: performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or less frequently than annually. The first page of the Performance Progress Report form (SF-PPR) must be submitted with all programmatic reports.
- 2.) Quarterly Financial Reports: the Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a). The U.S. Embassy in Vienna transfers funds through bank transfers using the SF-270 form. Therefore, applicants should not expect to use the Payment Management System (PMS) for drawdowns or financial reporting.
- 3.) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award.

Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The U.S. Embassy reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program.

### **Contact Information:**

Please contact Kellee Farmer, Assistant Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy Vienna, <u>FarmerK@state.gov</u> with any questions regarding this solicitation.